4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

there. (The Todas are the only group in this region who habitually wipe the rectum with green leaves.)

2.11. The nose is cleaned by holding it between the index finger and thumb of the left hand, and blowing the mucus onto the ground. With babies, a relative sucks the nose and then spits the mucus out.

No one should spit on the floor of the house or blow his nose there. Well-mannered people do not spit on the yard outside either, but might instead spit on the grass of the village green provided nobody else was nearby. Furthermore, people do not spit in a temple out of respect for the god; nor on a funeral ground. Two types of spittoons, nowadays of brass, are kept in the house: a *kuplike* for men and an *uggu kiṇḍi* for men and old women. The latter vessel must be kept in the outer room, and although men do use the vessel they will not touch it. The men's spittoon, *kuplike*, must not be used by women, but may be carried into the inner, more sacred room of the house.

Spitting is an act that normally accompanies the chewing of tobacco. It is charged with a good deal of social significance. Thus if a woman spits on the ground near an enemy, this means: "I don't like you — go away!" A man will spit at an enemy when abusing him, but if he otherwise spits in someone's direction it means he is going to fight with that person. If during a ceremony a boy is staring at a girl in the crowd, she either opens her mouth to show that she will accept his advances, or spits on the ground to show she does not. Until the nineteenth century one of the severest punishments for a woman was to make her drink water from an earthen spittoon in public.

2.12. Badagas clean the teeth by rubbing them with charcoal and then rinsing the mouth. Those who have settled in the Waina:ḍ (the Waina:ḍ Gaudas) make a black powder for cleaning the teeth, by frying up the husks of grain with salt. A proverb wisely admonishes that, "The teeth are spoiled by not picking with a stick."

2.13. In early days Badaga women rubbed butter into their hair and bodies (as Toda women still do); but they used no scents. In those times women had no hair brushes, and so they would take the prickly seed pod of the thorn-apple, dry it out, and use it instead. Now hairbrushes are universally used.

Women regularly remove their armpit and pubic hair nowadays, with the help of a special soap sold in the market which causes the

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

not savour the idea of that; (although if it happens nothing in particular follows). Should the infant die shortly afterwards, before it has been named, it too is treated as afterbirth material and buried at the usual cemetery. If someone asks the mournful family who has died, the answer must be "No one."

4.13. For the first day or two after birth the mother is given a hot bath four or five times daily. Up till this time she cannot bathe herself, but must have some woman help her. After that time she bathes herself in hot water, twice daily until 25 to 30 days after delivery, and thereafter once daily. Always, the water used is hot. The baby is given a bath three times daily for the first eight days, then twice a day till the nineteenth day, and thereafter once daily, in the evening only.

In the old days, the newly delivered mother was given a special preparation of little millet. This was first baked, and then boiled till it was a mushy porridge (Birch 1838: 104). Now she eats a non-liquid curry. For that peppercorns are fried in a clarified butter, then ground up on the curry grinder. Then some garlic is fried, and salt, tamarind and clarified butter mixed with it while it is kept warm beside the fire. A limited amount of this food is given to the mother twice daily until the fourth or fifth day after delivery, by an old woman who will restrict the quantity even though the mother might want more. Thereafter, for the next 20 to 40 days, according to the state of the mother's health, she continues with this as her morning meal, but in the evenings has paddy rice and lentil soup. She can take a small amount of milk, even from the day of her delivery. This can only be cow's milk, and must be boiled before drinking. It is recognized that a woman who has given birth may appear weak and ugly, and repeated births can lead to ill-health. A proverb puts it this way: "The appearance of a woman who has just given birth to one child is like the appearance of a heifer which has given birth that day."

No woman who has given birth may touch any household utensils till the third, fifth, seventh or ninth day after the first full or new moon, I was told; alternatively it has been reported that she must first see the crescent moon before the period of pollution can end (Thurston 1909: 109). She should be given no work for eight days before or eight days after her delivery: during that fortnight her husband must provide for all her needs, even if he is on the point of divorcing her. It used to be that after five, seven,

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

846 821 783 nine or 15 days she might begin to work in the house again (Jagor 1876: 199). Earlier yet, for her first birth, a woman would stay in the pollution hut until the next waning of the moon. In later confinements she would remain in the hut for only three days (Birch 1838: 104). The mother of twins, even if poor, should however 845 854 stay at home looking after them for at least three months, without doing any outside work.

"A girl who has delivered is a good sight; a field with good 846 539 777 801 crops is a good sight," according to one proverb. Within a month of the birth, on an auspicious day, mother and child return to her husband's house. The party must number (including both of them) at least five persons, and must be of an odd number unless it exceeds 21.

> 846 788 On arrival there, the infant is placed near the feet of an old man standing by a lamp within the milk-house. Placing his right hand over the head of the infant, the old man blesses it, and a feast is held, before the commencement of which two cups, one containing milk, and the other cooked rice, are produced. All the relations take up a little of the rice and milk, and touch the tongue of the baby with them. (Thurston 1909:109)

843 585 851 If a woman becomes pregnant for the twentieth time by the same husband (a previous marriage does not count), then, whether all the offspring are living or not, the couple go right through the wedding and seventh-month-of-pregnancy ceremonies again. These are performed on a lavish scale, even if the husband has to borrow substantially.

The Form and Sex of the Child

858 539 4.14. A proverb asks, "If a mother gives birth to a male child, will the father object to it?" Obviously he will not, since it is a blessing to the family (Verghese 1963: 420). The same idea is also expressed thus: "By delivering a son she is like a prima donna standing on a vantage point and calling out;" or "The man who has begotten a son and the man who has planted a coconut [tree] will not spoil." Another saying puts it quite succinctly: "A strong boy, a weak girl;" and yet another emphasizes that girl babies are not much wanted: "Even though you repeatedly tell her, she is

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

539 855 children are the same"—in that they cannot be properly controlled and so should be exempted from the rules of the household. And again: "If the child shits on your thigh, will you cut it right off?" It is recognized that bringing up children is no easy task: "Pacifying the children is no less a job than digesting the raw flesh of an animal" (Verghese 1963: 423).

Infancy

854 5.8. The socialization of the infant may have to begin with the education of the mother. Three or four days after the delivery she starts bathing the baby herself, but if this is her first child she will usually be helped for a couple of weeks by her own mother until she has learnt the correct procedure. No swaddling or tying of the child occurs (Jagor 1876: 199), but it is bundled up in old rags to keep it warm. As a proverb explains, "The child will grow fast with old rags, and the buffalo will grow fast with dung." It is for this reason that a pregnant woman keeps all old cloth. (More usually rags are made into pillows or bedding, or used at menstruation; and woollen rags are kept for bandages.) The child should always be kept in warm cloths, for it is believed that if his temperature is high it can be reduced to normal, but if it is lower than normal he cannot raise it. In the old days when no woollens were available, babies were covered with cotton folded to eight or ten thicknesses for greater warmth. Only used cloth is allowed, which is why the old rags are preserved; but if someone wants to give a baby a new cloth one of the parents should first wear it a little and rub it on the body so that it can be considered used.

825 5.9. Care is taken to keep a baby's face clean, especially during the first 40 or 50 days, when a cat might otherwise find milk on its face and either suffocate the baby or do it some harm.

539 514 It is accepted as natural that the nose often gets dirty: as a proverb puts it, "So long as the nose exists, won't there be mucus oozing from it?" As was mentioned earlier (2.11), the method of cleaning a baby's nose is to suck it and spit the mucus out. (If a woman has been chewing tobacco she washes her mouth out before doing this.) This method is considered more gentle than squeezing the nose; but after a child has reached six months relatives clean it with the index finger and thumb of either hand, or with a body cloth. Between the ages of three and five, depending on when the

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

parents train them, children begin blowing their own noses in this way.

5.10. During the first few weeks of life the baby's cranium is elongated by manipulation. Mothers used to be proud of this shape, but the practice is now a rare one. Beginning on the eighth day after birth, the manipulation is done every morning and night, and the limbs are also massaged. A woman warms her hands in front of the fire, covers them with clarified butter, and then presses them lightly on the infant's chest. Next the arms, thighs, legs, feet, knees and elbows are pressed strongly. The nose is pressed together from both sides, so that it becomes higher and less wide. Finally the cranium is squeezed between both hands (Jagor 1876: 196). Not knowing about this custom, a few anthropologists have commented on the anomalous dolichocephaly of the Badagas, so much in contrast with the mesaticephalic and brachycephalic crania of their ancestral homeland in Mysore (Thurston 1909: 67).

5.11. Badagas say that until the ninth day of life a baby cannot see or understand anything, although it has vision. This state may last even till the fortieth day, but usually it is after the ninth day that a baby is credited with hearing, sight and understanding. Between the fortieth and sixtieth days its understanding develops, and it recognizes its parents.

From its fortieth day the women begin to make the child laugh. It is felt they must make it laugh between then and its sixtieth day, and also make it cry by taking something away from it, otherwise the child will be considered dumb. If it will neither laugh nor cry, old people will peer into its mouth and if they can see a defect of the uvula then they know the child is dumb. There is no medicine to rectify this. If the child talks the uvula will grow; if he is silent, it will not. Till the fifth or sixth month no one should make a loud noise near the child, lest it become deaf. A child may be born dumb but it cannot be born deaf.

5.12. After the third month of a baby's life the mother will resume her normal fieldwork duties it she is poor; but if well-to-do she will wait until after its sixth month. The insecurity that an infant might feel as a result of now losing its mother's attention for many hours of each day is minimized by the care lavished on it by other female relatives, including its older sisters. Most commonly for the next few years the child's grandmother looks after it all day. (I

41 Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

repeatedly saw K. Sithamma at the age of 75 suckling a small grandchild to quieten it.)

5.13. The arrival of a new baby necessarily brings changes in the sleeping habits of a couple. When it is dusk the door of the house must be closed tight, for fear that a "bad wind" or evil spirit might enter and make the baby sick. This is compulsory until the fifth or sixth month of life: the door may not be opened again, even momentarily, until just before sunrise. If the father has not yet come home at dusk, then either the baby will go to a neighbouring house for the night or the father will have to sleep in one of them when he returns. In later infancy the door should be closed for the night at about 10 o'clock, and this practice will continue until the child is weaned.

When sleeping with her baby a woman's body is entirely nude, for if she wore clothes they would prevent heat from reaching the child from her body. Until a baby is six or seven months old the mother is advised to sleep with her back to it, and never to sleep while suckling: these precautions result from the fear the child may be suffocated by a breast. Thus if the mother wants to roll over on the bed she must first move the baby over. Usually the youngest one or two children sleep between their parents for warmth, with the unweaned infant always next to the mother. Alternatively mother and baby may use one bed, the father and older children occupying another bed. Sleeping with one's children is not altogether a comfortable situation: "The man who is sleeping with children and the man who is eating raw animal flesh are alike"—both experience difficulties. Other older children in the family may sleep together, but after reaching seven or eight girls sleep separately from their brothers, or else with their mother.

5.14. If a mother has intercourse right after giving birth this weakens the womb for the next delivery, Badagas believe, and so they generally do not do it until five or six months afterwards. One man told me he had enjoyed his wife about three weeks after two of his children were born, and the children died after 52 and 54 days, presumably because of the weakening of their mother's milk. Because of such dangers men used to ask a new father in earlier days, "Are you wearing your loincloth at night?" The cloth was considered sufficient restraint on his passion.

41 Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

Early Childhood

5.15. At about the fifth month of life the child, surrounded by blankets or other protective matter, is made to sit up. In the sixth or seventh month he will start to crawl, and once he does this he will be allowed to sleep on the floor, but not on a cot or shelf from which he might fall. The relatives encourage a child to crawl, then to stand and walk, by placing little articles as bribes in front of it. A Badaga proverb says, "See the power of the baby's legs when it crawls; see the state of the young plant." This means that the child's future life is reflected in the way it crawls; and similarly, "Judge the little children by watching the good movement of their legs while dancing." If instead of crawling a baby stretches its legs forward while sitting, and then inches its bottom forward, it is said to be a lazy child. Conversely the one who crawls on hands and knees will be walking very soon.

5.16. Children begin talking at 12 to 18 months. The parents at first use a few onomatopoeic words with them, as well as special words for children like the "baby talk" of English. Thus there are words for commonplace matters like sleep, bathe, etc., and a meal (*hittu*) for example is called *ku* for babies; *ku* is in fact ceremonial food mixed with milk.

5.17. It is the prime duty of old people in the home to educate and care for their grandchildren and great-grandchildren, particularly because the parents are often working outside somewhere. If younger people spend too much of their working hours playing with the baby someone will make the snide remark that "The thief of work has the child as a pretext." Even though children now attend school it is still the elders who teach them to talk, and then explain to them much about Badaga life. To do this they tell the children both traditional tales and stories they make up for moral instruction. In this context children often hear the Badaga proverbs, which encapsulate so much of the customary morality. Many of the folktales the children are told and then made to repeat are animal stories with some clear ethical content. Now that children go to school it is most usually after supper when they urge the elders to tell them stories. Children over five are not interested in the animal fables, and so they are told somewhat more realistic stories about Kurumba sorcerers, or about tigers and jackals that take children away at night. Such stories are told to make the children afraid of these

41 Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

half-a-dozen of the common patterns (1876: 195). These designs, made up of dots, dashes, crescents and circles, were also to be seen on the shoulders of some women, and the forearm and back of the hand were commonly tattooed as well. Although it was obligatory it was never an occasion for ceremony. The technique calls for an older woman, Badaga or otherwise, to etch the pattern on the skin with a thorn from one of two plants, the common Nilgiri barberry or the Bengal currant. Pins and needles are used now. The pigment used is finely powdered charcoal from the bottom of a pot, or else lamp black, mixed with rice gruel (Thurston 1909: 82). Afterwards an oil is put on to the wounds. Rhiem (1900: 504) adds that a silver finger-ring is plunged into a corrosive black liquid and then pressed against tattoo wounds. Shoulder, wrist and hand tattoos may be added later, even after marriage, while a woman is in the menstrual hut. Men are never present for a tattooing.

(*i*) *Milking Initiation.* Nothing ceremonial happens to a boy between his naming and head shaving in infancy, and the initiation into adult work between the ages of seven and nine. This involves his ceremonial milking of a buffalo (Natesa Sastri 1892: 757-58; Francis 1908: 131; Thurston 1909: 87-88; "Miles" 1933: 73).

(*j*) *Lingayat Initiation.* Boys of the several Lingayat clans, including the Woḍeya phratry, undergo a ceremony of investiture of the *linga* at about their 13th year. A *pu:ja* is performed and the boys learn a prayer (Natesa Sastri 1892: 758-60; Thurston 1909: 90-93). Today the ceremony, which is always to be done in an odd-numbered year of a boy's life, occurs even as early as his fifth year.

(*k*) *Puberty Rites.* Menarche is marked by complicated observations, as explained above (3.11); but for a boy's puberty there is no observance whatsoever.

Childhood Maladies

5.23. Whatever may seem to be wrong with an infant it is given no medicines until its fifth month. If necessary before then a medicine may be given to its mother, in the expectation that the child will derive a benefit from it through her milk. This is the case for example if a child is affected by a "bad wind."

In earlier days a thread with 108 knots in it

47 Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

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dried further. Finally the patient swallowed the pieces without chewing them first, so that their sharp edges would cut off any parts of the tonsil that remained. The pieces were swallowed before each of the next two meals following the operation. After this the patient just took the ordinary meals, but was advised to wash his mouth out with salty water for one or two days.

757 [825] COUGH (*kemmalu*)

5.29. The blood of a hare (*Lepus nigricollis*) used to be given as a throat medicine to children suffering from a cough (Thurston 1912: 85). Today the stem of a peacock feather is used instead to cure a cough or cold in young children. It is rubbed on a stone to produce a minute amount of powder, which is then mixed with powdered rhizome of the sweet flag and a little honey, and swallowed by the child. For babies, however, nothing but a half teaspoonful of honey is given, and for children between one and four years this is increased to a full teaspoonful. Only the honey from sealed cells of honeycomb is used as a cough medicine, although Badagas do use the honey from unsealed cells as a foodstuff.

755 SINGULTUS (*selamudalu*)

5.30. Someone should blow in an infant's ear to cure its hiccups. If this is not successful, then one blows on the top of its head.

757 825 PERTUSSIS (*kokkare*)

5.31. The flesh of the Nilgiri langur (*Presbytis johnii*) used to be sold in local bazaars as a cure for whooping-cough (Thurston 1906: 271); I have heard that it is still available, although illegally so since the animal became a protected species.

856 755 732 [826] [854] RICKETS (*sotte*)

5.32. If a baby is born with its limbs bent nothing can be done about it, although massage will be attempted in infancy, as we mentioned above (5.10). If it is thought there is no strength in the waist "because of the nerves in the hip," a treatment can be tried. Instead of bathing the baby in regular hot water, some water in which rice or preferably little millet, has been cleaned is kept, and each evening for a week or two this is heated for the daily

41 Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

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bath. When near body temperature the water is splashed onto the hips and waist by hand, and this area becomes stronger. The baby is not immersed in the water.

5.33. If the legs are weak they will bend when the child begins to walk, and so they must first be strengthened. To do this a long leaf of aloe is needed: all the spikes are cut off it, then it is heated over the fire and twisted tightly to squeeze out the juice. *Hulla majjige* (the name of several species of sorrel) is also ground up and its juice collected. Some salt and a small amount of wood ash from the hearth are mixed in with these juices, and the resultant liquid boiled until all that remains is a glassful of very thick paste. This is smeared all over the baby's legs up to the waist. It is left on, and more of the same concoction is added every morning and evening for the next three days, without any of it being cleaned away. On the third or fourth day the dry paste is cleaned off, and the baby rests for two or three days. Then the whole process is repeated. Four of five such series of treatments are given over a month, and afterwards the child should be able to walk alright. If it still cannot walk properly, however, this means that the bone has been bent since birth and no remedy is possible.

CONSTIPATION (*se:dalu*) 757

5.34. When a small child is constipated someone takes the rib of a tobacco leaf, rolls it between her hands a bit to remove any sharpnesses, and dips it in castor oil (or formerly gingelly oil). Several people hold the child still while the woman gently pushes the rib into the rectum, after which the child eases himself.

ENURESIS (*maggilucce*) 757 755

5.35. Some young children pass small amounts of urine every few minutes and wet the bed at night. If it is a mere infant three fingers wetted with castor or gingelly oil are put in its mouth to suck. A somewhat older child is given a half teaspoonful of the oil to drink.